The mission of the Kentucky Autism Training Center is to strengthen our state's systems of support for persons affected by autism by bridging research to practice and by providing training and resources to families and professionals. KATC is committed to improving the quality of life for those affected by ASD.
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ABOUT US
The Kentucky Autism Training Center (KATC) is a university-based program with a legislative mandate to enhance outcomes for all Kentuckians with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). KATC strives to “bridge the research to practice gap” by leveraging resources, building sustainable collaborative relationships, and “scaling-up” the use of evidence-based practices in all regions of Kentucky.

Beliefs
- All people with ASD have value, can contribute, and are unique.
- All people with ASD and their families deserve access to seamless systems of multidisciplinary support across the lifespan.
- Communities need to be prepared to embrace all individuals with autism.
- Support and services should be person-centered.
- Early diagnosis, followed by early intervention, can improve outcomes.
- Professionals need support and resources in order to sustain evidence-based practices and master new skills.
- Fidelity of evidence-based practice is the basis of effective service delivery across communities.
- Comprehensive planning and data based decisions are essential for continuous improvement of the processes and outcomes of our work.
- Attracting professionals to the field of ASD is important to the sustainability of services.
- Changing political and social environments will continue to demand flexibility and creativity.
- When we educate individuals with ASD, we aim for personal independence and social responsibility.

Vision
Kentucky’s leading resource on Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

Mission
The mission of the Kentucky Autism Training Center is to strengthen our state's systems of support for persons affected by autism by bridging research to practice and by providing training and resources to families and professionals. KATC is committed to improving the quality of life for those affected by ASD.

Roles
- Inform the systems of support for education, early childhood, mental health, and employment
- Build regional capacity
- Facilitate network
- Empower families to access the resources
- Development of documents, videos, and other evidence-based information
- Develop evidence-based models and practices for families, teachers, and schools
- Collaborate with the Kentucky Department of Education to develop training and technical assistance for schools and school district
**2008 - 2011 Strategic Plan**

The KATC works with key stakeholders in development and on-going management of our strategic plan. The KATC works to integrate the following strategies into all levels of operation:

- Purposefully integrate individuals and families into network, program, and resource planning.
- Use a variety of technology-based delivery and communication systems to connect with families and professionals.
- Promote the development of seamless systems of individual and family support in early intervention, mental health, education, and employment.
- Extend the regional capacity development approach to early intervention, mental health, and employment.
- Target general and special educators and administrators with information and resources about ASD. Support all school professionals in their efforts to provide students with ASD access to all school environments and the general education curriculum.
- Establish and conduct collaborative activities with University partners.

**KATC Goal One:** Have a regional ASD capacity in education for implementing evidence-based practice in districts and schools.

**KATC Goal Two:** Have a tested model that helps families, individuals, and practitioners in mental health and intellectual disabilities, early childhood, and employment to design, deliver, and evaluate services for persons with ASD.

**KATC Goal Three:** Enhance data collection at all levels of operation.
Advisory Board
The KATC has an Advisory Board that advises the Director in matters of policy, staffing, and operation. Board members are committed to the growth of the Kentucky Autism Training Center as it strives towards its mission to enhance supports for persons with autism by providing information, training and technical assistance to families and service providers across Kentucky. Board members are actively involved in the development of collaborative relationships. Members also provide input and expertise in the development, implementation and evaluation of services provided by the KATC. Unless restricted by their employment, members will assist the KATC to procure funding, in addition to state general funds, to accomplish its mission. Current membership include:

**Mike Armstrong**
Lawrence County Schools

**Tricia Bronger**
College of Education and Human Development
University of Louisville

**Diane Cowne**
Parent

**Rhonda Hedges**
Jefferson County Public Schools

**Barbara Lewis**
Parent

**Linda Linville**
Council on Postsecondary Education

**Kelly Morris**
Parent

**Nat McKay**
Parent

**Cathy Durkan**
Parent

**Carol Estes**
Supported Employment
Vocational Rehabilitation

**Bev Harp**
Human Development Institute
University of Kentucky

**Laurie Spezzano**
Parent

**Norma Thomas**
Parent

**Larry Taylor**
Exceptional Child Education
Kentucky Department of Education

**Peter Tanguay**
Department of Psychiatry
University of Louisville
Staff

**Jennifer Bobo, LCSW, MSSW**  
Family Field Training Coordinator

**John Thomas McKay**  
Intern

**Katie Carnazzo**  
Field Training Coordinator

**Robert Pennington, Ph.D.**  
Assistant Director of Training

**Maya Chan**  
Field Trainer

**Danielle Schnatter**  
Intern, UofL Department of Psychology

**Tonja Craig**  
Unit Business Manager

**Julie Stewart, M.Ed.**  
Field Training Coordinator

**Rebecca Grau, M.P.A**  
Assistant Director of Administration

**Diandre G. Thomas**  
Program Coordinator

**Emily Kirkam**  
Field Training Coordinator

**Deric Toney**  
Field Trainer

**G. Richmond Mancil, Ph.D., BCBA**  
Executive Director

OUR WORK

**Website and Online Community**  
The KATC website supports our mission by providing information and resources on autism spectrum disorders. The website provides information about disability resources, and evidence-based practices. During this past year, our website redesigned to improve “usability.” Specifically, we simplified the menu structure and reorganized the site by creating separate landing pages for families and professionals.

In addition, we have added an online community, which includes features such as user profiles, discussion forums, and live chat. The purpose is to bring parents and professionals closer to each other through online discussion, sharing of resources, and to promote easy access to KATC training materials. Currently there are 785 members of the online community.

**Newsletter**  
The goal of the KATC on-line newsletter is to provide current information and resources on ASD. The newsletter is posted on the KATC website, e-mailed through distribution lists, shared at meetings and trainings, and is provided upon request. During this past year the KATC newsletter was reformed to improve readability. Approximately 4,000 individuals receive our quarterly newsletter.
Family Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders
The Kentucky Family Guide to Autism Spectrum Disorders was developed to assist families of individuals with ASD. In addition to being a valuable source of information for families on a wide range of topics, this guide includes information about evidence-based practices along with web-based resources and identified books and journal articles for further reading. During past the past year the KATC disseminated over 500 print copies of this guide.

Amanda L. King Resource Library
The Amanda L. King Resource Library is a collection of materials on topics such as ASD, disability, education, transition, parenting, and child development. These materials are available for checkout at no cost to families and professionals across the commonwealth of Kentucky. The Amanda L. King Resource Library houses a large collection of resources on autism, special education, and vocational information. This collection of 970 items is available to all citizens of Kentucky.

Kentucky Autism Service and Supports Directory
The goal of the KATC’s Autism Service and Supports Directory is to increase information about community resources available to individuals with autism and their families. Users can search by age, county, service, and region. Currently, 380 providers are listed on the directory.

KYAUTISM LISTSERV
The KYAUTISM Listserv is hosted by the Kentucky Autism Training Center. The purpose of the KATC listserv is to share information, services, resources, and training opportunities in a positive and respectful way. Currently 344 individuals are subscribed to the listserv.

Awareness Materials
To promote understanding and awareness, the KATC has created a series of brochures for family members and professionals.

- Tips for Siblings
- Grandparents and Autism Spectrum Disorders
- How to be a Friend to Someone with Autism
- Tips for Firefighters
- Tips for Law Enforcement
- Tips for EMS Personnel

KATC created an address space on the back panel of the brochure for local contact information to facilitate the dissemination at the local level by service and support organizations.

Network of Families
Eastern Kentucky Autism Training of Trainers (TOT)
Eastern Kentucky Autism Training of Trainers (TOT) Project was conducted to enhance services for individuals with ASD in Appalachia by providing families and providers with access to practical information and by developing a network of local service providers with ASD-specific training. To build local capacity, the KATC identified stakeholders and collaborative partners to
assist in these trainings. Four training modules were delivered (each module was 1.5 hours) in three locations. The first two modules were presented in November 2010 and followed up six months later by the last two modules being presented in May 2011. Module topics included:

- Autism 101
- Handling Stress and Increasing Coping Skills
- It Takes a Village: Promoting Collaboration Among Families, Educators, and Related Service Professionals
- Planning for the Future

The service area was the 37 counties in the Appalachian region. Located in this region are the Big East, Upper Cumberland and Kentucky Valley Educational Special Education Cooperatives that support local school districts. Seventy three participants attended trainings on modules one and two and 40 attended trainings on modules three and four. Thirty counties in the region were represented. A variety of professionals participated including:

- Executive Directors and Low Incident Consultants from three Special Education Cooperatives
- Educators
- First Step workers
- Community mental health providers
- Day care trainers
- University professors
- Students from local Universities
- Family members and representatives form local support groups

Staff from each special education cooperative co-facilitated along with parents from support groups within this region, providing time to discuss autism from a parent’s perspective. Pre and post-tests were given to evaluate knowledge before and after the TOT sessions and efficacy of the TOT sessions.

KATC collected data from the participants and created a Collaborative Community Resource Guide that included contact information and the role of each participant to encourage strong networking and collaboration. Participants shared specific information on resources they have found that were available within their particular area as well as upcoming ASD trainings in their area.

KATC encouraged participants to create Action Plans to delineate plans to share the content of modules with local audiences (i.e., co-workers, daycares, churches, community groups). KATC maintained monthly contact with all trainers to support the delivery of Action Plans and provided support to trainers. KATC provide additional to coaching and resources to strengthen knowledge on a module topic.

KATC plans to expand this project in Western Kentucky in 2011 and Central Kentucky in 2012.

**Kentucky Parent Lead Autism Networks of Support (KY PLANS)**

KATC initiated effort to develop a network of support groups across Kentucky. The first step in this process is Kentucky Parent Lead Autism Networks of Support (KY PLANS). KATC
disseminated monthly information packets (e.g., person-centered planning, new to the diagnosis of autism, raise awareness, preparing for summer, guardianship & financial planning, be your own case manager) to 41 support group leaders that include research-based information, tasks, and community activities. In addition, KATC created a listserv for leaders of parent support groups to allow an increase in information dissemination from KATC as well as the opportunity for parents to network with one another.

Kentucky’s Partnership with the National Professional Development Center for ASD
KATC works in collaboration with the Kentucky Department of Education’s (KDE) eleven Regional Special Educational Cooperatives at all levels of operation. Cooperatives have the capacity to create and sustain change at the local level; such collaboration is essential to develop and sustain a network of professional development, training, and coaching to educators. Building upon this relationship, KATC initiated a collaborative workgroup in 2008 to develop a proposal and was subsequently awarded a partnership with the National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders (NPDCA). The NPDCA provides Kentucky with online training, technical assistance, and program quality evaluation tools, with the goal of developing model educational programs at the pre-school, elementary, middle and high school levels. In conjunction with special education cooperative staff and local educational agencies (LEAs), KATC will develop a model programs in all of the eleven Regional Special Educational Cooperatives. KATC adapted NPDCA resources and plans to support the efforts of every school district in Kentucky to promote: a) the early identification of children with ASD; b) the use of effective communication systems, positive behavioral supports, and social interactions for children and youth with ASD; c) enhanced access and learning within the general curriculum; and d) improved transition planning and post-school outcomes.

Model Sites – A Process Approach to Improving Outcomes for Students with ASD
KATC worked with the Central Kentucky, Big East, and Western Kentucky Educational Cooperatives to support the development of model classrooms at the preschool, elementary, middle and high school levels. KATC utilized and adapted resources from the NPDCA to assist efforts to create a statewide student center problem solving process that focuses on creating quality learning environments, incorporated evidence based instructional practices and monitoring progress through a rigorous data-based decision making process. As part of the model site process the KATC hosted three 3-day model site summer institutes, in each of the regions. Table 1 outlines the proposed rollout of the models sites and the KATC focused efforts with districts within the cooperatives.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model Site Location</th>
<th>Year 1: 2009-2010</th>
<th>Year 2: 2010-2011</th>
<th>Year 3: 2011-2012</th>
<th>Year 4: 2012-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson County</td>
<td>Central Kentucky Special Education Cooperative</td>
<td>Ohio Valley Educational Cooperative</td>
<td>Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Educational Services</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Big East Educational Cooperative</td>
<td>Caveland Educational Support Center</td>
<td>River Region Cooperative</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>West Kentucky Educational Cooperative</td>
<td>Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative</td>
<td>Wilderness Trail Special Education Cooperative</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Upper Cumberland Special Education Cooperative</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

During Year 1 and Year 2 of this initiative the KATC received coaching and support from the NPDCA to support the classrooms in Jefferson County and the Central Kentucky Special Educational Cooperative.

Twenty-four students in eight NPDCA model sites were targeted and three goals from each of their IEPs were selected for specific improvement. Technical assistance providers from KATC and local school districts partnered to coach school teams through selecting and implementing evidence-based practices to target these goals.

- All target students at all Kentucky model sites made progress toward targeted goals from their IEP.
- All students met or exceeded at least one targeted goal.
- Across all NPDCA model sites, students met or exceeded 76% of their targeted goals.
- Across all NPDCA model sites, students exceeded 50% of their targeted goals.
- Goals targeted a range of outcomes, including social, communication, self-help, behavior, and academic outcomes.

**ASD Cadres**

Building on the momentum of Kentucky's partnership with the National Professional Development Center for ASD and informed by implementation literature from the KATC, the Kentucky Department of Education and its eleven Special Education Cooperatives have developed an ASD Cadre of 736 members from 167 school districts across Kentucky – 94% of districts in the state are participating. The goals of the ASD Cadre are to increase implementation of evidence-based practices for students with ASD, build regional capacity and create tiered expertise. This dedicated group of professionals has attended four 6-hour trainings in autism related content this year and many members have reported putting the content directly into practice with students all across our Commonwealth. The trainings have addressed:
• Characteristics of learners with autism
• Functional behavior assessment
• Behavior intervention strategies
• Systematic instruction

The KATC staff and the excellent trainers working at the co-ops, who have been responsible for delivering these 6-hour sessions, meet regularly to ensure the content is relevant to and accessible by all attendees. We look forward to spring when the content will further address instructional practices and increasing communication skills of learners with autism. We will also be launching a new web-based communication tool so that cadre members have easy access to resources and opportunities to network with colleagues from all across our Commonwealth.

**Partnership to Develop Regional Teams of Professionals Prepared to Serve Young Children with ASD**

The KATC in collaboration with the Special Education Cooperatives, representatives from preschool & Head Start, the Commission for Children with Special Health Care Needs, and Early Childhood Mental Health Specialists are working under the leadership of First Steps to develop regionally based teams across the Commonwealth with expertise in screening, diagnosis, and interventions for children birth to eight. The purpose of this network of professionals will be to create tools and practices that improve transitions from across diverse service systems. Professionals in this network will receive specialized training in the following areas:

• Screening/Red Flags across environments
• Tools and process for referral
• Evaluation and diagnosis
• Resources and support for families
• Intervention and Practice Parameters
• Transition

A website to support this initiative is in the development stage. In fall 2011, partners will host a “kick-off” training event.

In preparation for the development of this partnership, KATC staff meet individually with staff from each of the 15 First Steps Points of Entry to discuss local, regional, and nation resources.

**Creating Supports and Services for Adults**

**KY APSE**

APSE is a national non-profit membership organization, founded in 1988 as the Association for Persons in Supported Employment, now known as APSE. APSE is the only national organization with an exclusive focus on integrated employment and career advancement opportunities for individuals with disabilities. A KATC staff member serves as an APSE board to support state to support efforts to promote the improvement of Supported Employment services for persons with significant disabilities experiencing barriers to employment through education, advocacy, collaboration, policy change, elimination of barriers, empowerment, and community participation. Specific duties include conference planning, collaboration with state agencies, facilitation of trainings, and promotion of employment of individuals with disabilities on the state and national level.
In addition, KATC staff person serves as an APSE Regional Delegate; duties include managing communication between National APSE and state APSE chapters, providing resource and mentorship to five states in the mid-west, providing feedback on initiatives, legislation, and resources to National APSE.

**Job Club**

During this past year, Community Employment Inc. and the Kentucky Office of Vocational Rehabilitation received an ARRA Stimulus Grant to develop a social skills group for young adults to address job readiness skills. The KATC has assisted Community Employment Inc. with developing quality, individualized programming for 13 adults with ASD. Program evaluation and modification has occurred throughout the Job Club to ensure the most efficient use of time and resources for both participants and Community Employment Inc.

**KATC Internship Program**

KATC established an Internship Program that creates a mutually beneficial relationship where a person with ASD cultivates their employment skills, and the KATC gets some much-needed help on a variety of important projects. This program purposefully integrates a person on the spectrum into network, program, and resource planning.

During this past year, John Thomas “JT” McKay was our first intern. JT took the lead in setting up the resource center in our new location (i.e., shelving, conducting inventory) and honed his data-entry skills with several important projects.

*I like helping at the KATC. I am excited and happy to be working at KATC. I really look forward to learning more about how to work in an office and make friends at work.*

- JT McKay

A new intern will join the KATC in August of 2011.

**Collaborative Workshops and Webinars in Kentucky**


https://louisville.edu/education/kyautismtraining


https://louisville.edu/education/kyautismtraining


Breckenridge County Autism Support Group. Hardinsburg, KY.


Bobo, J. (2011, February). *What is autism? An overview.* Foster Care/Adoption Unit, Department of Child Based Services. Louisville, KY.


Chan, M. (2010, August). *Kentucky waivers and funding sources.* Spalding University. Louisville, KY.

Chan, M. (2010, September). *Transition panel.* Bullitt County Public Schools. Shepherdsville, KY.


Chan, M., & Bobo, J. (2010, November). *Show me the money: Navigating Kentucky’s funding sources.* Parent and Professional Autism Support Group in Powell County. Stanton, KY.


Stewart, J. (2010, June). *Asperger’s and adolescence in schools*. Floyd County Schools. Prestonsburg, KY.


Contributions at the National Level
Presentations
Chan, M., & Mancil, R. (2011, November). *Where are we? Assessing the needs of adults with ASD living in Kentucky.* Poster session at Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence Conference. Columbus, OH.


Pennington, R. (2010, June). *Designing high quality programs for students with ASD: Reinforcement-based strategies to assess and address challenging behaviors.* Erlanger, KY.

Pennington, R. (2010, June). *Designing high quality programs for students with ASD: Strategies for improving communicative competence.* Erlanger, KY.


Pennington, R. (2011, April). *Evidence-based practice in intervention for students with autism.* Annual Kentucky ARC/TASH Conference. Louisville, KY.


Pennington, R., & Delano, M. (2010, November). *Evidence-based procedures to teach writing skills to students with ASD.* Annual Conference for the Ohio Center on Autism and Low Incidence. Columbus, OH.


Pennington, R., Delano, M., & Fenty, N. (2010, November). *Improving vocabulary and comprehension skills for students with ASD.* Annual Conference for the Ohio Center on Autism and Low Incidence. Columbus, OH.


Mancil, R. (2011, November). Sensory interventions for sleep and behavior in children with ASD. Poster session at Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence Conference. Columbus, OH.


comprehensive guide for the home. Poster session at Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence Conference. Columbus, OH.


Publications


College of Education and Human Development

In response to the statewide need for highly skilled professionals with expertise in autism spectrum disorders, the Special Education Program at the University of Louisville in collaboration with the Kentucky Autism Training Center has developed a proposal to offer an autism certificate program.

The purpose of the proposed Autism Certificate Program is to provide professionals (e.g., educators, speech language pathologists, occupational therapists, counselors, social workers, vocational trainers, etc.) with advanced knowledge in applied behavior analysis, communication and social skill interventions, behavior consultation, and evidence-based practices for individuals on the autism spectrum. The program will be designed to meet both the Behavior Analyst Certification Board’s (BACB) Behavior Analyst Standards and the BACB's Autism Standards.

The program will provide both school districts and community service providers with professionals who have strong teaching skills and strong behavior consultation skills.
Faculty members developed a curriculum for the program that includes five graduate level courses, an intensive summer training program and a capstone seminar in which students will demonstrate mastery of the program’s objectives through the completion of an intervention project.

The special education program, under the direction of Dr. Terry Scott, has approved the program. The board of the Kentucky Autism Training center supports the proposal and several community partners have submitted letters of support.

The proposal is being evaluated through a multilevel curriculum approval process. If the proposal is approved at all levels (College and University), it is anticipated that the first cohort of students will begin in 2012. Our first cohort has enrolled in prerequisites course for Fall 2011.

**Graduate Level Courses ASD Specific Courses taught this year:**
EDSP 635: Practicum in ASD
EDSP 644: Applied Behavior Analysis
EDSP 646: Augmentative and Alternative Communication
EDSP 670: Autism: Introduction and Understanding
EDSP 671: Autism: Strategies and Techniques
EDSP 672: Autism: Collaboration and Technology

**Proposed courses pending approval of autism certificate program / Graduate Level):**
EDSP XXX: Advanced Applied Behavior Analysis
EDSP XXX: Seminar: Current Topics in Autism
EDSP XXX: Behavior Consultation
EDSP 674: Supporting Individuals with HFA
EDSP XXX: Autism: Capstone Research Project

**University of Louisville Autism Center**

The University of Louisville and Kosair Charities dedicated the UofL Autism Center (ULAC) at Kosair Charities Centre April 15 of this year. Kosair Charities donated the rent amount to UofL during the five-year lease. The agreement allows for two additional five-year terms to the lease, bringing the value of the agreement to more than $2 million.

The University of Louisville Autism Center at Kosair Charities is committed to building a collaborative partnership among the area’s leading autism resources. Incorporating services from the Bingham Clinic, the Weisskopf Child Evaluation Center and the Kentucky Autism Training Center, this new center furthers each partner’s mission to provide innovative treatment, evaluation, intervention, training and research to serve residents of Kentucky and surrounding states.
2011-2012 KATC Strategic Plan: Support the Systems that Serve Individuals with ASD and their Families

In upcoming year the KATC will continue to focus our work on supporting the systems that serve in individuals and families. Efforts will focus on developing a network of families, improving educational outcomes, enhancing mental health services, promoting early identification & early intervention, and developing services for adults. Using a process approach we will work to develop relationships with service systems & providers, develop materials and supports and provider direct training. In the current economic climate, the KATC is mindful to utilize emerging technology to develop systemic supports that improve the quality of services and support for persons with ASD.

Families

Goal 1: KATC will create, grow, and maintain relationships with service systems and providers that serve individuals with ASD and their families

Goals 2: KATC will develop materials and supports consistent with evidence-based practices for families, educators, and service providers

Goals 3: KATC will provide direct training consistent with evidence-based practices to families, educators, and service providers across the commonwealth of Kentucky